

Message Text

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PASS DHEW, PHS, HSA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TBIO, IN

SUBJECT: IMMIGRATION OF INDIAN DOCTORS

REF: STATE 176443

SUMMARY EVEN THOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES AND SANCTIONS TO DISCOURAGE IMMIGRATION OF PROFESSIONALS IN CERTAIN CATEGORIES, THERE ARE NO LEGAL RESTRICTIONS BEING IMPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO RESTRICT IMMIGRATION AT THIS TIME, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE VOICES OF CONCERN IN THE GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT THAT WOULD LIKE TO IMPOSE MORE STRICT LEGAL ACTION ON

IMMIGRATION.
END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL SOURCES IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND A NUMBER OF HIGHLY PLACED DOCTORS IN AND OUT OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE AND YOUNG DOCTORS WHO ARE APPLYING FOR IMMIGRATION VISAS TO THE US, THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPEAT NO LEGAL MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOI TO PREVENT IMMIGRATION OF INDIAN PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS TO THE US OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY. IT WAS INDICATED BY MANY THAT INDIA, BEING A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY, WOULD HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME LEGALLY RESTRICTING ITS CITIZENS FROM IMM-
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IGRATION. (THIS WAS THE SUBJECT OF A SUPREME COURT DECISION

SEVERAL YEARS AGO.)

2. THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT DOES TAKE THE VIEW HOWEVER, THAT SINCE IT SPENDS BETWEEN \$15,000 TO \$25,000 ON THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING EACH OF ITS DOCTORS, THEY (THE DOCTORS) SHOULD HAVE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF ALLEGIANCE TO SERVE THE COUNTRY. INDIA BEING A POOR COUNTRY DOES NOT RELISH USING ITS FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ADVANCED COUNTRIES, EVEN THOUGH THIS HAS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PRESTIGE VALUE AND ATTESTS TO THE HIGH CALIBER OF INDIAN MEDICAL EDUCATION.

3. TO ADD TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DILEMMA THERE IS MAJOR UNREST AMONG THE YOUNG RESIDENT DOCTORS OF THE COUNTRY FOR HIGHER PAY, BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS AND RECOGNITION OF THEIR HEAVY WORK-LOAD. THIS SITUATION SPARKED A THREE WEEK DOCTORS' STRIKE IN BOMBAY THAT HAS SPREAD TO THE WHOLE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA. THE STRIKE ENDED ON AN UNSETTLED NOTE AS TO EXACTLY WHAT DEMANDS OF THE DOCTORS WILL BE ACCEDED TO BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT.

4. BECAUSE OF THE INCREASING NUMBER OF DOCTORS IMMIGRATING FOR VARIOUS REASONS THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES IMPOSED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS TO DISCOURAGE DOCTORS AND CERTAIN OTHER SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING PROFESSIONS FROM IMMIGRATION:

A) THE ECFMG EXAMINATION WAS TERMINATED IN 1969 IN INDIA

B) GOVERNMENT PROFESSIONALS INCLUDING DOCTORS MUST SIGN A RS. 500,000 BOND BEFORE GOING ABROAD FOR HIGHER STUDY IF THEY ARE SUPPORTED BY GOI FUNDS. THE BOND IS CANCELLED ON THEIR RETURN TO INDIA.

C) THE " DOCTOR AND ENGINEER DRAFT" BILL PASSED BY THE PARLIAMENT IN 1972 WHICH WOULD REQUIRE ALL YOUNG GRADUATES TO SERVE UP TO 4 YEARS IN THE RURAL AREAS HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED. THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT MOVES TO PUT MORE TEETH IN THE BILL BY NOT AWARDING THE MEDICAL OR ENGINEERING DEGREES UNTIL AFTER THE RURAL SERVICE.

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D) THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN RECENT COMMENTS IN THE PARLIAMENT THAT ALL PROFESSIONALS IN CRITICAL FIELDS SUCH AS PHYSICIANS, IF THEY WISH TO IMMIGRATE, SHOULD PAY THE GOVERNMENT BACK THE PRICE OF THEIR EDUCATION IF THEY HAD RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM GOI SOURCES.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED IF THERE SEEMS TO

BE ANY MAJOR CHANGE THAT WOULD INFLUENCE THE NUMBER OF
DOCTORS IMMIGRATING TO THE US.
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